

From: Robin (Roblimo) Miller
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 12/11/01 7:25am
Subject: Criminals must be punished

If Microsoft can be convicted of criminal behavior in a federal court and then have the Department of Justice decide no punishment is warranted, other criminals are going to expect the same treatment. We might as well not have a DoJ if we are going to prosecute criminals, convict them, and then not punish them.

Or does Microsoft get special treatment because of large contributions to the Republican Party and individual Republican candidates?

Either way, the DoJ's failure to ask the judge to impose harsh penalties against Microsoft sets a bad precedent.

Anyone who has raised a child knows that when you threaten punishment and don't carry out your threat, the child behaves worse than ever in the future. That child's brothers and sisters, too, learn that their parent's threats are toothless and can be ignored.

The other potential message here is, "Give lots of money to the political party in power, and you can break federal laws without fear of punishment."

Let's not send either message. Let's punish lawbreakers, both so that they don't repeat their crimes and so that other potential lawbreakers get the message that we Americans don't tolerate illegal behavior, even by people or companies who have enough money that they can buy access to highly-placed government officials.

Thank you in advance for doing the right thing, both as Americans yourselves and as public servants who work for *all* U.S. citizens.

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